

HealthPartners Guidelines for Supporting Breastfeeding Colleagues



In recognition of the well-documented health advantages of breastfeeding for infants and mothers, we provide a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding parents to express their milk during work hours.

This guideline shall be available to all current colleagues and included in new employee orientation training.

Leader responsibilities

Breastfeeding parents who choose to continue providing their milk for their infants after returning to work shall receive:

- **Milk expression breaks**

Breastfeeding colleagues are able to express milk (pump) during work hours using their normal breaks and meal-break times. For reasonable time that may be needed beyond the usual break times, colleagues should work with their leader (and employee health, if necessary) to schedule additional time. Reasonable time needed to pump while at work will be compensated, with the exception of time that is normally unpaid (such as unpaid meal-break times), for the twelve months following the birth of the child. If time is needed beyond 12-months, colleagues should work with their leader on whether additional paid or unpaid break time may be provided.

For clinicians who work on production, more information will be available soon for how to submit the time spent pumping while at work. For now, please track the time you spend pumping while at work (including dates/times), with the exception of time that is normally unpaid (such as unpaid meal-break times).

When more than one breastfeeding employee needs to use the designated lactation room, a room reservation system can be set up to reserve the room. Refer to the “Lactation room designation and support document” with instructions on how to set up the calendar or a paper calendar may be sufficient.

- **A place to express milk**

A private, clean room (not a restroom) with a lockable door (lock may be temporary), an electric outlet, table and chair, shall be available for employees to express milk. The room will also be located as close as possible to a sink with running water for washing, handling and rinsing out breast pump parts. If a colleague prefers, they may also express milk in their own private office, or in other comfortable locations agreed by their supervisor. Expressed milk can be stored in designated refrigerators provided in the lactation room or in colleague’s personal cooler. Locations for various HealthPartners lactation rooms are available on myPartner, search for lactation.

- **Breastfeeding equipment**

Colleagues may provide their own personal pumps to pump at work. If there is a lockable, secured room and number of colleagues pumping at the same location, HealthPartners may provide an electric (hospital grade) breast pumps in select locations. In addition to the locations that provide a hospital grade breast pump, HealthPartners may provide a personal attachment kit to be used with the hospital grade pump while pumping at work. One kit per lifetime colleague at HealthPartners.

- **Education and resources**

New mothers returning from maternity leaves should connect with their leader prior to return as well as review myPartner for information on local resources and classes. Community prenatal and postpartum

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breastfeeding classes and informational materials are available for all mothers, fathers and partners. Check myPartner for available peer-to-peer support groups.

- **Staff support**

Leaders are responsible for informing pregnant and breastfeeding colleagues about the lactation support program, policies and practices that will help facilitate each colleague's infant feeding goals. It's expected that all colleagues and leaders will assist in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding parents.

Colleague responsibilities

- **Communication with leader**

Colleagues who wish to express milk during the work period shall keep leaders informed of their needs so that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the colleague, the leader and the work area. For clinicians who work on production, more information will be available soon for how to submit the time spent pumping while at work. For now, please track the time you spend pumping while at work (including dates/times), with the exception of time that is normally unpaid (such as unpaid meal-break times).

- **Maintenance of milk expression areas**

Breastfeeding parents are responsible for keeping milk expression areas clean (using anti-microbial wipes to clean the pump and area around it) for the next user. This responsibility extends to both designated milk expression areas and other areas where milk may be expressed.

- **Human milk storage**

Colleagues should label all expressed milk with their name and date collected so it is not inadvertently confused with another colleague's milk. Each colleague is responsible for proper storage of their milk using appropriate refrigerator or personal storage cooler. It is not against any law or rule to not store human milk in the same fridges as food or medications.

- **Use of break times to express milk**

When more than one breastfeeding colleague needs to use the designated lactation room, colleagues may use a room reservation system, if applicable, to reserve the room.

References:

- [WHD Fact Sheet #73, Break Time for Nursing Mothers under the FLSA \(Spanish Version\)](#)
- [Break Time for Nursing Mothers FAQs](#)
- [FLSA Handy Reference Guide](#)
- [MN Dept of Labor and Industry: pregnant workers and new parents](#)
- [Wisconsin Breastfeeding Coalition](#)
- [United States Breastfeeding Committee: Federal Workplace Law space requirements](#)
- [CDC Healthier Worksite Initiative, Workplace Lactation Support program toolkit](#)
- [The Business Case for Breastfeeding: Steps for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite](#)